

CITY OF SOUTH FULTON, GEORGIA
City Council Retreat – Lanier Islands Legacy Lodge
7000 Lanier Islands Parkway, Buford, GA 30518
April 30 – May 1, 2021



Attendees: William "Bill" Edwards, Mayor
Catherine F. Rowell, District 1 Councilmember
Carmalitha Gumbs, District 2 Councilmember
Helen Z. Willis, District 3 Mayor Pro Tem
Naeema Gilyard, District 4 Councilmember (Present via Zoom)
Corey A. Reeves, District 5 Councilmember
khalid kamau, District 6 Councilmember
Mark Baker, District 7 Councilmember (Present via Zoom)

Staff: Tammi Saddler Jones, City Manager
Vincent Hyman, City Attorney
Corey Adams, Sr., City Clerk
Don Toms, Assistant City Manager

Consultants: Malik Watkins, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
Rachel Bembry, JAT Consulting Services, Inc.
Emily Poole, Georgia Department of Economic Development
Jared Lombard, Atlanta Regional Commission
Lee Walton, Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions
Bill Stark, InnerComm Group

Citizen Attendees: Jose Garcia, District 4 (Attended April 30, 2021 at 3:47 PM)

Provided is a high-level summary of the discussion and action items from the Council Retreat. The Retreat began on Friday, April 30, 2021 at 8:23 AM and was facilitated by Dr. Malik Watkins with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The Retreat concluded on Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 3:30 PM. There were no votes or official actions taken during the two days of the Retreat. Presentations presented during the Retreat are available in the City Clerk's Office.

Friday, April 30, 2021

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Edwards, Councilmembers Rowell, Gumbs, Willis, Reeves, khalid. Councilmembers Baker and Gilyard were present via Zoom.

FY 2021 and FY 2022 Proposed Budget Highlights: Ms. Bembry reviewed the FY 2021 and FY 2022 Proposed Budget Highlights. Ms. Bembry outlined the FY22 Budget Process and current revenue and personnel projections. Preliminary revenue projections are \$72.8 million. The preliminary personnel projections are \$51.7 million (\$52.8 million if a 3% increase is applied to all

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employees.) Lastly, Ms. Bembry discussed implementation of a new software program (Enterprise Resource Planning-ERP) to improve efficiency, growth, internal controls, and payroll.

Mayor Edwards- Expressed concern regarding the length of the hiring process and suggested that there must be a balance between increasing technology and the number of employees the City has. Requested that staff provide an estimated timeline for implementation of a 911 Program.

Mayor Pro Tem Willis- Expressed concern about placing all funds in one financial institution and suggested that staff consider placing some funds in African American banks. Expressed concern about reporting (confiscated funds) and lack of financial controls. Seeks clear and complete information regarding the amount of confiscated funds.

Councilmember Rowell- Urges the City move towards innovation. Encourages financial institutions that do business with the City to explore opportunities to expand within the City. Seeks clear and complete financial information regarding the Public Art Fund, 911 Fund implementation strategy, and Courts.

Councilmember Gilyard- Suggest that capital budget planning (and all FY22 Budget planning) be tied to our Strategic Plan. Expressed need for a strategy to address funding of the City's needs.

Councilmember Gumbs- Questioned staff regarding transparency and the process to obtain information from staff.

FY 2022 Budget Revenue Recommendations: Mr. Toms outlined the FY22 Budget revenue recommendations and personnel projections as outlined in his PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Toms outlined several revenue sources and recommendations for increased revenue. They are:

1. Property Taxes-Current Year
2. Local Option Sales and Use Taxes
3. Insurance Premium Taxes
4. Intergovernmental Revenues
5. Franchise Taxes
6. Licenses and Permits
7. Special Police Services
8. Business Taxes
9. Recreation Program Fees
10. Real Estate Transfer Tax (Intangible)
11. Development Impact Fees
12. Storm water Assessment
13. Fire Fee Assessment
14. Street Light Assessment

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15. SPLOST

16. Solid waste

Mayor Pro Tem Willis requested that Mr. Toms stress that the City does not have a \$10 million dollar deficit. Mr. Toms and Ms. Bembry concurred that there is not a deficit. Suggested that it is time to have a URA Meeting for the Council.

Councilmember Rowell requested to see the number of employees utilized in the Jacobs' contract with the City. Suggests that the City look at partnerships and programming to offset costs and potentially realize revenue (i.e., True Colors). Requested that staff verify money that has been spent by the URA Fund and audit the funds.

City Manager Jones inquired whether the City has an investment policy.

Proposed Fulton Industrial Boulevard (FIB) Annexation Service Delivery: Mr. Toms reported that City departments have been meeting to prepare for the addition of the Fulton Industrial Boulevard area to the City of South Fulton. There are approximately 900 businesses along FIB. The City will be researching how much additional revenue may be available as a result of franchise fees and business licenses. Mr. Toms reported that funding is the greatest challenge. The Police Department will need additional officers. Mr. Toms advised that there will be a revenue gap from the time FIB comes into the City until the first of the year when business license money will be available for the City. City will explore options with Fulton County as well as review freeport requirements and percentages. Mr. Toms advised that the City is working on a "Welcome to the City of South Fulton" messaging with a document with the elected officials, staff, and important contacts. Mr. Toms advised that the staff will set up meetings specifically pertaining to FIB for the Council to receive additional information.

Mayor Edwards – The City need to work closely with Fulton Industrial Community Improvement District (CID) and coordinate regarding projects they are working on. Specifically, what is the City's responsibility for capital projects. Major concern is establishing a Haz Mat unit with equipment on FIB. Requested that staff review agreements with neighboring jurisdictions. May have to look at actual aid, as opposed to mutual aid agreements.

Mayor Pro Tem Willis recommended that the City Manager set up a reception and welcome the FIB businesses to the City by hosting a reception and welcome video. All Councilmembers need to be involved. Request a tour of FIB for the Council as soon as possible. Would like the CID to make a presentation to the Council similar to what other CIDs have done.

Councilmember Rowell suggested that we provide literature and messaging similar to what we did with the Loch Lomond community. Develop a page on the City's website with information for new businesses from FIB.

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Zoning Ordinance: Mr. Walton advised he has a presentation which he hopes addresses many of the concerns previously expressed by the Council. Mr. Walton recommended that each Councilmember purchase the reference book, “Zoning and Land Use Laws”, by G. Douglas Dillard. Mr. Walton advises that to address concerns regarding like uses, the Council may consider modifying the criteria for special use permits. (Slide 24). Additionally, a clear policy statement from the City regarding like uses would provide defensible justification regarding use permits.

Councilmembers requested to express their concerns on the front end to allow Mr. Walton to have a record of their issues.

Mayor Pro Tem Willis – Like-uses (beauty salons) with distance requirements; subdivision standards and building standards; time allotted to consider zoning cases (need additional time on the front end)

Councilmember Khalid – In the new Zoning Ordinance, controversial items were addressed by administrative variances. The issue is the Council still must hear the request. Previously the Council was told they are legally prohibited from saying “no” to certain use permits. Distance requirements need to be addressed. Advised he will send a list of issues to determine where the concerns reside: Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, or the Comprehensive Plan. Request notice for development. Currently, if the development has its zoning in place, no notice is provided. Is there a way to eliminate use permits for like uses? Request that the Planning Commission also receive training and is involved with the revisions to the Zoning Ordinance discussion.

Councilmember Rowell – Expressed concern regarding distance requirements and requested clarity regarding categories.

Councilmember Gilyard – The overlay districts are a major concern in the Zoning Ordinance. It appears they are all similar instead of being unique to the certain areas. Expressed concern regarding Chapters 3 and 4. Concerned about density, lot and building guidelines and concerned about convenience stores having slot machines.

Comprehensive Plan Process: Mr. Lombard outlined the goals and process for citizen input pertaining to the Comprehensive Plan Update as outlined in his PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Lombard also explained the Impact Fee Program and the requirements to establish the program. Impact Fees can only be used for capital projects. (Slide 66)

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Mayor Pro Tem Willis – Suggested that the Welcome All area be included in an overlay district. Suggest that the City develop and send a City-wide mailer to residents to engage them regarding the Comprehensive Plan process. Supports an Impact Fee program.

Councilmember Rowell – Suggest that the City develop an interactive map for citizens to provide input. Supports a “food hall” if placed in the right area. The Comprehensive Plan should direct developers to the nodes as established by the City. The City should package up our strong data points and tell a positive story about why developers and people should come to South Fulton.

Councilmember khalid – The Comprehensive Plan must acknowledge — at least in the introduction, if not in every section — that South Fulton is 90 percent African American. Like the Southside of nearly every MSA in America, many of the challenges we face today are a result of raced-based government policies and decisions at the federal, state, and local level, like Redlining begun by the FHA. The City cannot solve problems created by raced-based government policies with a race-neutral plan.

Councilmember Gilyard – The Comprehensive Plan should be data-driven as opposed to the current narrative. Environmental Justice also needs to be addressed and enhanced within the Plan.

Mayor Edwards – The Plan must be inclusive and demonstrate that all are welcome to the City.

Proposed TSPLOST Renewal: Mrs. Jones reviewed the schedule for public input and the draft Project List for the Proposed Draft TSPLOST II Renewal as outlined in her PowerPoint presentation. If approved, TSPLOST II will bring in an estimated \$90 million in revenue. The current list contains \$113 million in projects for the City. Staff will present the proposed list to Council in May 2021 and a special called meeting may have to be convened to formally vote on the list in June 2021.

Councilmember Reeves – Expressed concern regarding the planned roundabout in his community. Requests that staff look at other measures, if feasible.

Mayor Pro Tem Willis – Request that the Public Works Department perform an assessment of critical needs.

Economic Development/Non-Disclosure Agreements: Ms. Poole explained economic development in Georgia and the process to negotiate and complete development deals as outlined in her PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Poole led the Council through a question-and-answer period. A suggestion was made to add space on the City’s website listing all businesses in the City, as well as communities.

Team Building Exercise: Mr. Stark led the Council through a few team building exercises. Provided below are his notes from the exercise.

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Provided is a list of the outcomes and learnings that were discussed.

As part of the experience, each Council person should commit to living-out one of these ideas more fully with the team.

For each Councilperson I'd ask: Which number is your big takeaway to do more of yourself?

1. The foundation of great teamwork is trust and communication
2. Build trust with each other by spending time together
3. How you start your instructions or message sets the entire tone (drawing)
4. Listen to understand ("tell more about what you're saying") (drawing)
5. If we go too fast, we will likely get parts of it right and parts of it wrong - slow down (drawing)
6. Leverage each person's role and expertise to get maximum results; value each person's role, not just yours - Council is a team sport (newspaper)
7. Take more time upfront to discuss and plan out things; seek more creative solutions maybe during your work-sessions (newspaper)
8. The time you take up front creates a foundation for success and quality (newspaper)
9. There are multiple ways to build a house with similar results; we have to respect each others' way (newspaper)
10. Your non-verbal communication can help get your point across or it can damage relationships (pouty, folded arms, etc.) (birthday line-up)
11. Other: _____

Mr. Stark hopes the team had some fun, got to build a bit more trust by spending time together and that they learned something or were reminded of something meaningful that will make them all better team members.

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Saturday, May 1, 2021

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Edwards, Councilmembers Rowell, Gumbs, Willis, Reeves. Councilmembers Baker, khalid and Gilyard were present via Zoom.

Proposed Solid Waste Ordinance: Mr. Toms outlined the draft Citywide Solid Waste Collection Program as outlined in his PowerPoint presentation. The presentation included residential benefits, the proposed revenue model and equipment needs.

Councilmember Gilyard – Expressed major concerns regarding service and rising costs with one proposed vendor. Also questioned how the Enterprise Fund will be funded and will the General Fund have to be cut in some areas to fund the Solid Waste Program.

Mayor Pro Tem Willis – Advised that she and Councilmember Reeves have been working on the single vendor Solid Waste model with Mr. Toms. All aspects and concerns have been addressed.

Councilmember Rowell – Recommended that staff review dumpster examples in Strongsville, Ohio. Additionally, questioned how will Merk-Miles transfer station works with the proposed Program? Merk-Miles needs to consider longer hours for customer convenience. Advised that there is a current State recycling grant which the City may be eligible for.

Councilmember khalid – Recommended that the City hire additional staff in the 311 center for the first 6-months of rollout, particularly to handle billing questions and coordination with the Fulton Tax Assessor and Commissioner's offices. Also asked that City Manager also look into Glass Recycling, beginning with Strategic Materials in South Fulton.

American Rescue Plan Act: Mrs. Jones reviewed the estimated funding allocation for the City (\$31 million) and timeline for receipt and expenditure of funds as outlined in her PowerPoint presentation.

Councilmember Reeves- Suggest funding for local farmers and to establish a tool bank.

Mayor Pro Tem Willis – City needs to develop a comprehensive policy regarding food insecurity. Suggest funding be allocated to re-surface and re-furbish City parks athletic fields.

Councilmember Gumbs – Questioned whether American Rescue Plan Act funding can be used for reimbursement purposes for Councilmembers who utilized their district funds during the pandemic.

Mayor Edwards – Requested that staff document and account for all funds received and distributed including the CARES Act funding.

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Councilmember Rowell – Focus on improving information technology deficiencies and digitize records.

Councilmember Gilyard - Resources should be made available for small businesses and rental/mortgage assistance. Additional areas needing funding are broadband cable and stormwater.

Councilmember khalid – Questioned whether American Rescue Plan Act funding can be used for ERP software.

City Attorney's Office: Attorney Hyman discussed the vision for the City Attorney's Office and his philosophy regarding the practice of law. Attorney Hyman reviewed certain sections of the City Charter and led the Council through a question-and-answer period.

Council Relations: Dr. Watkins led the Mayor and Council in a discussion regarding how the Council interacts with each other and makes decisions as a group.

FINAL - APPROVED